



## Before I Wake

*Kathryn Smith*

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You may call it a dream job . . .

And in some ways, you'd be right. I actually get paid to study people's dreams. It comes much easier than my employers at the Sleep Center suspect; after all, I, Dawn, am the daughter of the king of the dream world, and I can roam the dreams of others, battling the nightmares that plague them.

I call it a nightmare . . .

Honestly, I could use a good night's sleep. But ever since I met Noah Clarke, I'm even more torn between the two worlds: smart, sexy, and able to control his own dreams, Noah could be my perfect man—except he's being stalked in his sleep by an unearthly evil, hell-bent on destroying him . . . and the entire world.

## **Before I Wake Details**

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Author : Kathryn Smith

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## From Reader Review Before I Wake for online ebook

~\*~Princess Nhya~\*~ says

I really liked this one. I was doing alot of stopping and starting with it though. partly because I was also reading other books at the same time. I love Noah and Dawn together as well as individuals. The dream world is a fascinating subject and this author does it justice when explaining how it works in this particular world and how humans as well as the immortals are effected by this and how this world can be manipulated. All of this is shown to you without it coming off too sci-fi. It has "meat" to it and the plot as well as the characters involved will keep you captivated. I love Dawn's father, Morpheus.. AWESOME DAD! and Verek who is loyal to Morpheus and must teach Dawn the ways of her father's world.

Dawn is half humman/immortal. She is the 1st of her kind. An anomaly. People from her Father's world do not know whether to worship or fear her because she is Morpheus's daughter, who happens to not only be the God of Dreams but the King of their people in the dream realm. There are certain things that Dawn can do that her father cannot and he is suppose to be the most powerful. Of course as all kings do, Morpheus has enemies, who seek to destroy him, because he fell in love with a human and had a child. Dawn for most of her life has chosen to live among the human world trying to deny her immortal half. Ironically she is a dream psychologist. This is how she meets Noah and starts a chain of events that will cause her to make the choice of dealing with her legacy. Her relationship with her Father and her Mother(who she resents) and her human family who knows nothing about who she really is and what their mother has done. This is a very interesting read. I highly recommend it. I've already started the 2nd book in this series and so far that has been just as interesting.

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**Sally says**

THIS IS SO NOT MY TYPE OF BOOK AT ALL!!!!

Proof that you can not judge books by their covers. I first saw this in a German bookshop and seriously, HOW gorgeous is that cover?! And the blurb made it sound okay as well... and then I finally found a copy in English and argh.

Okay, so I did quite like Dawn, she was a good main character, though often her narration bugged me. Seriously, there were cases of WTF and W00t (with zeros!) *in the narration*. And she said "yayee me" a lot and ugh. I just couldn't take it seriously. I also did not see anything special in Noah, he was just too typically The Obvious Hero and bleh.

Also, there were way too many words at times. Using five words in place of one, overstating the obvious, drilling things in, too much description. I was reading this on the bus to/from the Cotswolds on Thursday and at one point I came across the line "So I tossed on a bright pink chenille turtleneck sweater" and spent about five minutes rewording that to Beth. So I tossed on... a sweater. My pink sweater. My pink turtleneck. A turtleneck... see?! Do we *need* to know so much detail? Do we need to know that she's putting on x colour Sephora lip-gloss and y shade Mac eyeshadow, instead of just "some make-up"?!

And there were also waaaay too many pop-culture references, that have mostly already become far too dated. And in some cases, their usage becomes a hindrance when the reader doesn't get them. Palming a description

of something off as "it was a bit like The Matrix" does not make sense to someone who has not seen said film. This book has so many references like that that it's really going to suffer even more in years to come when most of the things referenced slip out of common knowledge, because a LOT of them were obscure even only about three years on. (I know a lot of people have seen The Matrix, but there were so many others where I'd never even *heard* of the actor/show/band/etc.) It's lucky that I've seen Forrest Gump because there were a lot of mentions of that, but that was at least good film to pick as well because a lot of people have seen it over the years and it's stood the test of time, and that's kind of what you need when it comes to references like that. If you want it to make sense, pick something that's been around a while and STAYED around - like the Psycho reference. Don't pick something that's big in 2008 because by 2011 you might have people going, who? /rant

I'm probably being generous giving this two stars, but I was at least kept interested through to the end and despite all the things that annoyed me, there weren't any points where the writing itself was laughable - just frustrating and not my cup of tea! Reeceally not at all, not in any kind of universe.

Also, "chair legs". SERIOUSLY. No.

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### **Julie (jjmachshev) says**

More hot paranormal action! I just finished "Before I Wake" by Kathryn Smith and what a good read it was! Smith's world centers around the 'Dreaming' and spins the tale of the half-mortal daughter of Morpheus.

Dawn is the half-mortal daughter of Morpheus. Her mother became depressed after a miscarriage and began spending the majority of her time sleeping. She somehow met Morpheus in her dreams and Dawn is the result. But Dawn's life hasn't exactly been an easy one. She doesn't feel at home in either world and once her mother put herself into a coma to be with her love Morpheus, Dawn quit 'visiting' Dreamworld. She's stuck between a rock and a hard place as she can't tell her human 'father' or siblings what's going on even as they spend thousands of dollars on medical intervention to 'wake' her mom who doesn't want to be woken! Got all that? As if that's not enough, it appears that some of the denizens of Dreamworld think that Morpheus has crossed the line by allowing his human lover and hybrid child into Dreamworld. And these same enemies of Morpheus have apparently decided that the best way to hurt him is to kill his 'heir', Dawn. So now she's trying to learn how to defend herself and her human loved ones while not betraying them.

Sorry if that description was confusing, but the book is fabulous. Very original and a refreshing change from the 'normal' paranormal (say that three times fast) stories I've seen lately. It's a very intricate world and there's plenty of material if author Kathryn Smith decides to continue with a series.

If you've been looking for something different (with hot, tortured heroes), then look no further. Run out and get "Before I Wake". Sweet dreams!!

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### **Brina says**

Inhalt:

Als ein älterer Mann ruft >>Diese Frau ist ein Traum!<<, halten die Umstehenden das für ein Kompliment. Dawn hingegen denkt: Verdammt, woher weiß er das? Denn Dawns Vater ist Morpheus, der König der

Träume - aber mit diesem Teil der Familie will die junge Frau nichts zu tun haben. Sie möchte ein normales Leben führen, auf dem Sofa liegen, TV-Serien schauen und von ihrer heimlichen Liebe träumen, dem Künstler Noah. Dann aber beginnt ein geheimnisvoller Killer, seine Opfer im Schlaf zu töten. Dawn erfährt, dass es sich um einen Traumdämon handelt, den nur sie allein aufhalten kann. Und zwar möglichst schnell, denn Noah schwebt in großer Gefahr...

Zum Buch:

Eine wirklich toll geschriebene Geschichte, mit sowohl lustigen als auch ernsten Momenten. Die Thematik das mehr hinter den Träumen stecken als nur Träume finde ich richtig spannend und ist so interessant geschrieben, das man als Leser regelrecht in die Geschichte gezogen wird.

Protagonisten:

Für Dawn ist ihr Job eine Berufung. Sie ist intelligent, klug, besitzt eine grosse innere Stärke und ist ein Genussmensch. Wie jede Frau sollte sie sich mehr zutrauen und sich nicht verunsichern lassen. Mir war sie sympathisch, da sie für mich sehr realistisch dargestellt war und zur Abwechslung mal eine Frau mit Kurven ist die Größe 42 trägt.

Noah versucht immer aufrichtig zu sein, obwohl sein Leben von traurigen Erlebnissen überschattet wird. Er kämpft immer wieder gegen seine Vergangenheit an und will zeigen das er nicht mehr der hilflose kleine Junge ist, von damals. Er besitzt eine gutes Maß an Empathie und hat ein Gespür für außergewöhnliche Dinge und weiß genau was und wen er will.

Meinung:

Das Buch konnte mich wirklich begeistern. Die Verzierungen bei jeder Kapitelüberschrift gleichen denen, die wir auf dem Cover sehen und ziehen sich so, wie ein roter Faden, durch das komplette Buch. Ich fand die Geschichte angenehm zu lesen und alles sehr gut verständlich und detailliert beschrieben.

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### **Joycemearon says**

The advertising of makeup products throughout was annoying but the story was fine.

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### **Beverly says**

I had trouble enjoying this book at the start. It got better half way in to the book. I don't know if I would get another in this series. I would write what this is about but a lot of readers have done that already. I would not call this a paranormal romance, yes, it does have a small love story in it but I still would not classify it that way.

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### **Mandy Bookaholica says**

Die Reise in deinen eigenen Traum – und Albträume werden Wirklichkeit.

Wenn wir träumen verarbeiten wir die Dinge, die unsere Seele belasten um uns den freudigen Seiten des Lebens zuwenden zu können. Doch was, wenn ein dunkler Traumdämon deine Träume so verzerrt, dass du sogar Angst vorm Einschlafen hast?

An Dawn's Seite, lernen wir das Leben eines Traumwesens kennen, denn solch eines ist sie. Die Tochter von Morpheus, dem König der Träume und als Wächterin ist es ihre Aufgabe, die Träume der Menschen zu bewachen, dessen sie sich aber abgewendet hat, denn sie lebt lieber als Halbwesen unter den Menschen. Die Story konnte mich nur am Ende überzeugen, denn mich langweilte es – mal mehr, mal weniger stark. Ich war sehr gespannt, ob mich das Buch von dem Genre Fantasy mitreißen kann, in dem keine Vampire, Dhampire oder Werwölfe eine Rolle spielen. Leider konnte es dies nicht erfüllen, was aber darauf schließen lässt, dass Fantasy in der Regel nicht so mein Fall ist.

Freunde der phantastischen Welten werden hier aber definitiv kein schlechtes Buch lesen. Es konnte mich nur einfach nicht überzeugen, was sicherlich nicht auf die Idee und oder die gesamte Geschichte zurückzuführen ist. Es hat mir gezeigt, dass dieses Genre nicht für mich geeignet ist, woran aber der ein oder andere sein Vergnügen haben wird.

Neben einer schönen Liebesgeschichte überraschten mich allerdings die erotisch prickelnden Passagen ;) Daher kann ich dem Buch auch keine schlechte Bewertung geben, denn ich habe keine Vergleichsmöglichkeiten und denke dennoch, dass es eine gelungene Geschichte ist. Ob ich den 2. Teil lesen werde, weiß ich allerdings noch nicht, denn jener liegt schon auf meinem SuB.

Fazit

Träume, Dämonen, phantasievolle Welten – dies bringt das Buch mit sich und für Freunde des Fantasy-Genres sicherlich keine schlechte Story. Für mich war es nur leider nichts, denn diese Lektüre zeigte mir mal wieder, dass ich mit dem fantasylastigen nichts anfangen kann.

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## **Paranormal Romance says**

The heroine is a nightmare; literally. Her father is the God of the dream world but her mother is human and married to another man. The heroine has always judged her mother for that selfishness. The woman may have doted on the heroine because she was the daughter of the immortal but the rest of the family have been seemingly tossed aside as her mother not chooses to sleep permanently to be with her lover. This paired with the desire to live a decently human life has driven the heroine to forsake her powers and ignore her calling. But she can't ignore it completely. And so she gets an education and now studies dreams. This is where she meets the hero. Strong, odd at times but so damn handsome it almost hurts to look at him- she finds this man intensely fascinating. It's the way he can shape his dreams that draws her in. When in a nightmare, he has the ability to morph it into something else, anything else. And she's attracted to him for that strength- well among other things. But her fear over losing her job makes her think twice about doing anything about that attraction- also, she may not be fat but size 12 is hardly thin and she does have self consciousness about her figure. But when the hero comes to her, not as a patient but as a man who knows what she is, she is stunned. His dreams are trying to kill him, he tells her. And she knows that whatever creature raped her in her dreams is now tormenting the hero. She knows she has to stop it, whatever it is and she knows she needs her father to do it. It's the desire to see the thing that hurt her and that's slowly killing the hero destroyed that mends the fences between father and estranged daughter. Not completely, feelings are still raw and the heroine doesn't like his behavior or his push for her to accept her job as a nightmare. But he begins to train her to defeat this thing and she needs all the help she can get. Meanwhile in the earthly plain, her relationship with her patient has developed far past doctor and patient appropriateness. He is a damaged man, control issues stemming from his abusive childhood make his defensive whenever he thinks people imagine him to be weak. And the heroine does. Just as she feels weak towards this draw towards him, he feels the same. But the fact that he's just a human and she a nightmare makes him feel vulnerable towards this creature tormenting them. He can't do anything to protect himself or her and he hates it. He's bitter towards it and it's the cause of most of their

fighters. The heroine admits she wants to 'fix' him and all his demons but he needs to live so she can love him- this is most pressing. So she'll do anything she can to kill the terror and save the man before time for both of them runs out. This book had a very interesting dynamic between contemporary romance and fantasy. I enjoyed the domesticated behavior between the hero and heroine. It felt comfortable and easy- the only sore spot of their budding relationship was the Terror after them. The hero would get defensive and testy whenever perceived as weak but in reality he was very strong and able for a man being hunted by a creature from another dimension. He was cool and calm- he was that artist loft man in a t-shirt and jeans. He was described as being pretty intense and as the reader, I got that. He was free with his thoughts and emotions and even though he could be irrational at times, he was quick to smooth things over. The book was written from the heroine's perspective so the main focus was on her. Though she was trained in psychology she herself had major mommy and daddy issues as well as issues with herself and her destiny. She started off as being a bit timid, not wanting to make waves but as the story progressed she grew stronger. She voiced her opinions and stood her ground. I enjoyed the developing relationship between the heroine and hero but thought the plot to be a little slow- it could have been shorter in length to cut down on the repetition of scenes. All in all it was a good book- not as good as I recall it being the first time around but good all the same.

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## **Lily says**

Siempre había leído muy buenas críticas de esta autora pero todavía no había comprobado por mí misma las bondades de alguna de sus novelas. Con *Antes de despertar* puedo decir que he quedado más que satisfecha de mis deseos de soñar y que me apetece mucho continuar la historia con el segundo ejemplar.

En primer lugar el argumento y el mundo creado por Kathryn me ha parecido de lo más interesante y original. Me ha encantado que la cuestión central desarrolle las posibilidades de los sueños, tema por el que tengo debilidad y una gran curiosidad. A mi parecer, este tema, al ser poco tratado en las novelas de este tipo, le da un atractivo especial a la trama y un efoque más fresco.

Me han gustado bastante los personajes principales. Están muy bien definidos y se aprecian muchos matices en su carácter y en su comportamiento. Dawn es psicóloga y vive a caballo entre dos mundos: el real y el onírico. Su universo se tambalea cuando conoce a Noah, uno de sus pacientes por el que se siente profundamente atraída. Y no es para menos, es inteligente, atrevido, sexy y además es artista. Es un personaje que me ha intrigado sobremanera, tanto por su forma de ser como por su forma de comportarse. Ambos comienzan un tira y afloja que no pueden consumir porque son terapeuta/paciente. Delicioso.

Pero no solo la línea argumental principal ha llamado mi atención. Hay diversas subtramas que merecen la máxima atención por su riqueza de matices. También los personajes secundarios tienen su importancia. Por poner un ejemplo, e intentando no revelar demasiado, la historia de la madre de Dawn ha captado todos mis sentidos.

Como punto negativo tengo que reconocer que en ocasiones no me ha resultado todo lo ágil que me gustaría y, en ocasiones, hasta un poco repetitivo en algunos pasajes concretos. Pero nada demasiado grave en el conjunto de la novela.

En resumen, te animo a que te adentres en este mundo de sueños y pesadillas.

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## **Candace says**

I had high hopes for this book, but what started out as interesting just ended up annoying. This author should get money for product placing, there was nothing in there that wasn't identified by product name. She couldn't just have indian food, she had to name each dish, each makeup product etc etc. Half the book was product names. The male lead was pretty pathetic, and you never find out much about him.

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## **Ithilian says**

A psychologist/dream analyzer that can actually step into your dreams is a pretty good basis for a book. Throw in a love interest, some family issues, a bad guy, and a really interesting dream world, and it gets even better. The only bad thing I can say about this book is that it seemed to end very abruptly. I wish there was a little more focus on Nightmare training, it was hard to believe the bad guy could go down so quickly. The characters were likable and realistic, and the story as a whole was believable. I'd love to read more about the characters coming into their powers and see what sort of plot there is to overthrow the dreamworld king. This book is a good series starter, I hope the rest doesn't disappoint.

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## **MountainKat says**

Enjoyable concept, but a bit slow to start. It read more like a YA book - simpler style. Typical UF though, lots of questions left unanswered with not enough resolution to even the main storyline. I probably will read the second book, but not right away.

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## **Morgue says**

I only gave away 2 stars because Dawn makes a pretty tough protagonist. Otherwise, this book was pure agony. Do not recommend.

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## **Sarah Mac says**

I was hovering between three & four stars for this one...up until the last few chapters. Now I'm decided. :P You could read much worse in this genre, & I'm not ruling out another Kathryn Smith novel in future. But I have no real desire to continue this series; it hasn't inspired my interest beyond what I've read here.

So far as PNR goes, there are good points. The heroine isn't a negative-sized pixie waif; while she admits to being intimidated by said negative-sized pixies, she doesn't spend time angsting about her fluffier body type (sheesh, since when did 'normal' equal 'fluffy'). And the hero, to his credit, is all about her fluffier type & finds her oh-so-sexy as she is, which is great. Furthermore, they don't just hop into bed after fifty pages of bantering, & take a fairly good time building their relationship & tension before doing the deed. (Clearly PNR doesn't have to follow the same ridiculous rules as historical romance.) As for the paranormal content,



this is about dreams with a slight tang of mythology. Yes! I love dreams in urban fantasy/horror. Dreams are the shiz, authors. Don't neglect that shabby, schizo kid in the corner of the paranormal playground. The dream mythology in this book is fairly simple, but it works well enough...

...which leads me to the negative points. The last few chapters ruin an otherwise decent effort by tumbling into that all-too-frequently-employed fantasy technique, i.e. Things Are Doing Things & the bad guy is defeated because *this happened, this happened, & I suddenly won the struggle because this happened*. It's difficult to put into words, but I dislike when terms like 'essence' or 'power' or 'magic' are thrown around in big sweeping hooks. Don't just manifest "power" or "essence" or "self" as a physical object without explanation. What does the Underworld have to do with the construction of her dagger? Why has nobody mentioned the Underworld before that object became necessary? And the father's appearing out of nowhere smacked of deus-ex-machina, even though we already knew he was prepared to intervene if needed. What? I don't care if it's the first bit of a series -- these world-building details need better explanation than "it is what it is," especially if all the characters take whatever "it is" at face value.

Other negatives: Product Placement. Lawdy, but I hate product placement in urban fantasy. *We already know it's contemporary*. Stop using brand names. Stop using tv shows. Stop using specific actor references. It dates the book even after three months have passed, y'all. Also, the narration would flow along fine & dandy for much of the novel, then jar me awake with really dreadful slang insertions that belong in YA if they belong anywhere (and I'm not a fan of them in YA, either). Expressions like *w00t* & *yayee me* (yes, spelled that way) don't add personality or humor -- what works in television voiceovers reads stupidly on paper.

Lastly, the plotting felt more like YA (aside from the sex scenes & a squicky rape scene early on -- that stuff was adult, natch) in that Dawn has Mommy Abandonment Issues & rebelliousness against Daddy because he's not the guy who raised her like a normal father. She's not confident around men & has fallen for the resident mysterious bad-boy on her dream therapy caseload. When she finally decides to embrace her heritage & save the man she loves, she goes through "training sessions" with some hottie Dreamkin badass. Even as she improves her skills in *The Dreaming*, her victory is solidified by Daddy Dearest's intervention....etc, etc. So yeah, it has a distinct YA flavor that was odd for a narrator that's 28 years old.

So, yeah -- not a bad book, but I won't actively seek future installments.

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## **Juliane says**

Rezension auch hier: <http://buechertruhe.blogspot.com/2011...>

### **Inhalt:**

Die 27 jährige Dawn ist die Tochter von Morpheus, dem König der Träume. Halb ist sie ein Traumwesen, halb menschlich, denn ihre Mutter ist eine Sterbliche. Dawn arbeitet als Psychologin in der Traumforschung, ihr Lieblingspatient ist der gutaussehende Noah, der unter Alpträumen leidet. Doch dann wird auch sie von einem Dämon in ihren Träumen heimgesucht. Sie ist schockiert, als sie erfährt, dass ihr Dämon derselbe ist, der auch Noah verfolgt. Ist das Zufall oder liegt dem etwas viel Größeres zu Grunde?

### **Meine Meinung:**

"Tochter der Träume" ist leicht zu lesender Roman für Zwischendurch. Seine Stärken liegen in der Grundidee. Man merkt, dass die Autorin sich gut in die Materie eingefunden hat und es ist interessant zu lesen, wie sie sich die Traumwelt von dem Traumgott Morpheus vorstellt.

Morpheus, der Gott des Traumes. Eine mystische Gestalt, die in diesem Buch leider nur eine Nebenrolle spielt. Dafür ist seine Tochter die Hauptperson. Leider hat sich so rein gar nichts Mystisches an sich. Sie kommt mir plump, naiv und gefühlsverwirrt herüber. Sie wird bedroht, jede Nacht - in ihren Träumen - könnte sie wieder auf ihn treffen. Der, der sie - brutal? - missbraucht hat. Dawn hat Angst, doch kommt diese Angst und die Bedrohlichkeit des Dämons nie wirklich herüber.

Zu Beginn wird erwähnt, dass Menschen im Schlaf aus unerfindlichen Gründen sterben. Den Aspekt fand ich total interessant, nur leider hat ihn die Autorin als Hintergrundinformation stehen gelassen. Klar erfährt man, warum sie letztlich sterben. Aber dennoch wird es zu wenig aufgegriffen. Ich finde, die Autorin hat nicht die richtigen Schwerpunkte gesetzt. Mit der Hervorhebung mancher Szenen und Beziehungen hätte mir die Geschichte um einiges besser gefallen.

Man merkt, dass die Autorin hauptsächlich erotische Literatur schreibt. Oft standen die erotischen Szenen - wenig abwechslungsreich - im Vordergrund. Hätte nicht sein müssen, denn leider war es oft zum falschen Zeitpunkt und unpassend. Sowieso habe ich Dawn und Noah ihre Liebe nicht richtig ab. Zwischen den beiden war es eher ein "Übereinanderherfallen". Selbst die Frage, ob sie sich bekommen oder nicht, wurde nie gestellt, sie waren von Anfang an (mehr oder weniger) zusammen.

Zum Cover: Es gefällt mir richtig gut! Was man auf dem Bild leider nicht sieht ist, dass es auf dem Cover glänzende Schnörkel und Blumenmuster gibt. Das verleiht dem Cover einen edlen Touch. Auch die Titelwahl finde ich gut! Mir gefällt der Originaltitel einen Hauch besser, aber der deutsche Titel ist auch sehr treffend.

Insgesamt ist eine Liebesgeschichte mit spannenden und mystischen Elementen, die nicht in die Tiefe geht, dafür aber mit Leichtigkeit und Ideenreichtum punktet.

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